

## News from Region 2

Caption: *Lori Manes and her son.*



### Lori Manes found the start to success at Horizon Education Alliance

Lori came to Horizon Education Alliance (HEA) Adult Education in early February 2014 with a dramatic history. She was pregnant and estranged from her family.

She says, "I was sleeping on a friend's couch and was surrounded by fake marijuana. I knew I couldn't bring a baby into that kind of life. So I asked myself, 'life or death?' and I walked away from everyone I ever knew and set my goal on making my life for my baby."

She said she saw a cross on the sign for the Faith Mission, Elkhart's shelter for the homeless, and she knew that was her first step. Finding incredible generosity at the Mission, she soon had a part-time job and learned about HEA Adult Education, a short walk away. Our distance-only learning best fit her schedule and she was off and running. Lori worked every day on her lessons, sometimes coming to our lab: "I loved how I had a coach to guide me, and HEA is a great program because they offer one-on-one help, and not just with my lessons. They helped me to not get stressed out."

Within six months, Lori passed her HSE (High School Equivalency) test and signed up at the Elkhart WorkOne for CNA training through WorkINdiana.

She now has a home through public housing, and has started the process of college applications to major in criminal justice. Change can happen, according to Lori, and it starts with education. “I always refer people to HEA Adult Education.”

Article submitted by Barb Stith, Director of Horizon Education Alliance Adult Education and Lori’s teacher. The adult education program is one of five initiatives of HEA scanning education issues from birth to grave.

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## Erin Sprinkle - a Region 7 Success Story



Erin Sprinkle

Submitted by: Laura Elsbrock, Area 30 Adult Education Program Coordinator

Laura Elsbrock, the Area 30 Adult Education Program Coordinator, works with the local Bridges out of Poverty group. Several times a year this organization offers “Getting Ahead” classes that help individuals who are just getting by explore ways they can take control of their future. Many of these individuals are students who attend Area 30 adult education classes. These students are often trapped in a cycle of unemployment, lack job skills for advancement, and are often struggling just to stay afloat. The “Getting Ahead” program meets two days a week for 8 weeks and is primarily a round table discussion. It was through this round table discussion that Erin Sprinkle shared her desire to go back to school and work in the medical field. Several caring individuals immediately put her in contact with Laura.

Although Erin knew she wanted to pursue a career in the medical field, she was unsure how to make this dream become a reality, especially since she was a 27-year old single parent with four children under the age of 10 and had attempted college once before, but was unable to complete and defaulted on her loan. Once connected with Laura Elsbrock, they first worked on determining the requirements needed for Erin to return to college. Over the summer Erin enrolled in the Area 30 adult program and did a quick brush up on her general educational skills with a focus on Math, Science, and Critical Thinking. Next, she focused on time management skills and developed a schedule that would allow her to reach her goals. Before long, it was determined that Erin was a good candidate for the WorkINdiana Medical Assistant Certification course. After beginning class in September, 2014, Erin was ready to take the national certification test (CCMA-Certified Clinical Medical Assistant) at the end of December, and recently learned she had passed! In the meantime, Erin has become a full time student at Ivy Tech by working toward her Associates Degree in Medical Assisting and will soon begin her clinical externship at a physician's office in her home town.

Erin has learned how to manage her time and focus while still being able to spend quality time with her children and family. She has even inspired her mother to enroll in an Area 30 High School Equivalency class so as to begin her own personal, educational journey. Erin is making huge strides toward building her future life and is a real inspiration to her fellow students! She really exemplifies what can happen when a work certification course is offered to someone who really wants to make a change in their current situation and is willing to do the work required to succeed.

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## News from Region 5



*Sarah James visits her local WorkOne Career Center*

Sarah James was 16 years old when she stepped out of high school. While in school, Sarah found that she just did not fit into the school culture. She was bored in the classroom. Sarah

knew that although she was leaving school, she had a dream to complete her high school education.

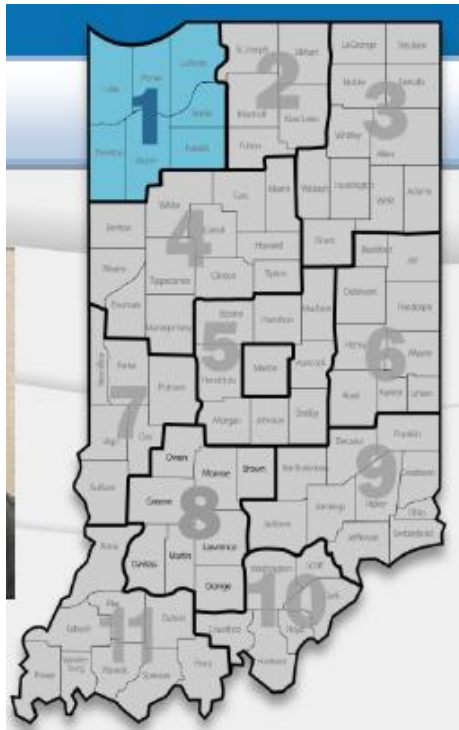
One day, Sierra Shelly, Sarah's aunt who also was a WorkOne client, decided to reach out to Sarah to help her connect to the local libraries where the adult education (AE) classes took place. Sarah found her pathway to the Brownsburg Youth Class. This is where she met Suzie, her teacher. "Sarah was a complete joy; she filled the class with her bubbly spirit and helped other kids who needed a lift." said Suzie Burns. In adult education classes, Sarah acquired the resources she needed to prepare for the high school equivalency test. She also met a good friend, Taylor Arredono, and they promised each other, "We will get out of school as fast as we can so we can start our paths as a Certified Nursing Assistant and Dental Assistant." Taylor and Sarah graduated one year ahead of schedule. On August 20, 2014, both Taylor and Sarah officially attained their High School Equivalency Degree.

While Sarah was in AE classes, Bart Doan from the WorkOne was a guest presenter. Bart provided the class with WorkINdiana career profiles. While reviewing the material, Sarah's next vision took shape. She wanted to pursue dental assisting. Bart helped her stay on track by constantly communicating with her about her goals. Bart helped Sarah learn how to communicate professionally and present herself to potential employers.

Sarah started Dental Assisting and Radiology Classes at Vincennes University on September 9, 2014. While walking into these classes, she felt a combination of excitement and fear. Sarah reflects back saying, "No one else looked like me," meaning she was by far the youngest person in the classes. Her instructor, Debbie, was very encouraging and bubbly. The instructor made the material easy to understand and celebrated the fact that Sarah was getting a "jump start" on her career track. Sarah completed the coursework and earned A grades during the class. February 2015, Sarah joined the ranks as a certified Dental Assistant and Radiologist.

In January, Sarah met her new WorkOne Youth Employment Training Advisor, Christy McIntyre. Christy knew that Sarah had just one month before she would graduate from the dental assisting program. Christy helped Sarah prepare a professional resume. Christy also encouraged Sarah to talk to her externship sites about doing a paid work experience. Sarah was very excited about the opportunity to work professionally in the field and build more skills. She presented the opportunity to Indiana Periodontics, and they were eager to bring her onto their team. Christy held a meeting with Dr. Jackson, who negotiated out the terms of her work experience. Barb, the office manager at Indiana Periodontics said "Sarah is an impressive young lady, and she impressed us during her externship."

Christy asked Sarah to reflect back and share what the WorkOne has done for her. She responded by saying "Everything! WorkOne got me where I needed to be for each task I needed to tackle. I did the brain work, but WorkOne gave any help I needed." Today, Sarah can celebrate that hard work! She graduated from high school early, she attended college classes and she is now working in her field. What does the future have in store for Sarah? In early April 2015, Sarah visited IUPUI to explore health sciences and the dental hygienist program. Today, Sarah has the skills and confidence to pursue her vision on her own, many thanks to WorkOne!



## News from Region 1



Submitted by: Jose Torres

Mr. Kevin Brown, WorkINDiana Success Story

In Region 1 we have a great WorkINDiana success story. Mr. Kevin Brown had not earned his High School Equivalency (HSE) and was unemployed. He went to the Merrillville Adult Basic Education (ABE) program to obtain his HSE. There he met Sharon Wang, the ABE Counselor for Merrillville Adult Education during a presentation about services offered at the local WorkOne. Mr. Brown was interested in welding training through the WorkINDiana program. Mr. Brown showed true “GRIT” in obtaining his HSE and entering into Welding training with Calumet Welding. After completing his WorkINDiana welding training in September 2014, Mr. Brown started working as a MIG Welder at Tower International in Chicago, IL. He is now making \$17.50 an hour. When asked about his WorkINDiana experience, Mr. Brown stated *“My experience through the WorkOne was the most outstanding experience that has ever happened to me. The WorkOne has assisted me with choosing a career that would benefit my family. The WorkOne has also helped me to choose a career that best took my interests, and I would like to say thank you and I really appreciate your assistance!”*

Eligible Adult Education students may qualify for the WorkINDiana program, which allows individuals to earn the HSE diploma and an entry-level career certification at the same time. WorkINDiana is targeted to students who need adult education and occupational training

Adult Education students may enroll in WorkINDiana during their current program year of enrollment and the full program year after exiting Adult Education, provided all other criteria are met. Students must be co-enrolled in WIA Title I (adult, dislocated worker, youth) and WIA Title II (Adult Education Programs) and pass a drug test.

Students who meet the requirements for WorkINDiana have the tuition and the certification paid for through the Indiana Department of Workforce Development’s WorkINDiana grant, administered by the regional Workforce Investment Board. WorkINDiana funding also can be used for supportive services for students with financial need.

The WorkINdiana certification programs currently offered in Region 1 are Certified Nursing Assistant, Certified Welder, Truck Driver (CDL-A), Pharmacy Tech, Certified Production Technician, Patient Care Tech, Electronic Records Health Technologist, and Emergency Medical Tech (EMT-B). The entry-level certification programs are typically between 40 hours and up to 14 weeks in duration, depending upon the certification requirements.